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TO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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State Dept. review completed

ТОНАК 84

TO: THE SECRETARY  
FROM: HELMUT SONNENFELDT/WILLIAM HYLAND  
SUBJECT: SALT TALKS WITH GROMYKO

1. WE ARE SENDING YOU SEPARATELY THE ANALYSIS OF AN EXTENSION OF THE INTERIM AGREEMENT AND THE VARIOUS WAYS FOR INTRODUCING OR DEFERRING TRIDENT. AS THE TABLE IN THAT MESSAGE INDICATES, IN ALL CASES BUT ONE WE WILL SUFFER A SMALL NET LOSS IN SLBM NUMBERS AND IN SUBMARINES, WHILE GAINING, OF COURSE, IN WARHEADS. THE POLITICAL IMPACT OF WIDENING THE SO-CALLED NUMERICAL GAP WOULD BE A MAJOR PROBLEM, UNLESS THE RETURN IN THE FORM OF A MIRV AGREEMENT IS SIGNIFICANT. EVEN IN THE CASE WHERE THERE IS NO PROJECTED LOSS IN NUMBERS THE CONDITIONS ARE TRICKY, I.E., A 13 MONTH SLIPPAGE IN THE TRIDENT PROGRAM, TERMINATING THE AGREEMENT IN OCTOBER 1979, AND DELAYING REPLACEMENT UNTIL DEPLOYMENT RATHER THAN SEA TRIALS.

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE  
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

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2. OUR VIEW IS THAT YOU HAVE TWO BASIC OPTIONS: EITHER CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR THE CHANGES IN THE INTERIM AGREEMENT LINKED TO A MIRV AGREEMENT AT THE 850 TO 1100 RATIO, OR TO CONCEDE NO CHANGE WHATSOEVER IN THE INTERIM AGREEMENT, BUT IN RETURN, PRESS FOR A BETTER MIRV PACKAGE, NAMELY A BAN OR VERY LOW LIMIT IN HEAVY MIRVED MISSILES, AND A TOTAL OF ABOUT 700 MIRVS FOR THE SOVIETS.

NGA review completed

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3. IN THE FIRST OPTION, STAYING WITH YOUR LATEST PROPOSAL FOR 1980, YOU MAY WANT TO EMPHASIZE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

-- WE CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO ACCEPT A SITUATION IN WHICH THE US IS FROZEN IN NUMBERS OF ICBMS AND SLBMS AND ALMOST FROZEN IN MIRVS TO VIRTUALLY OUR CURRENT LEVEL, WHILE THE USSR BUILDS UP TO ALMOST THE US LEVEL OVER THE NEXT 5-6 YEARS;

-- WE HAVE NO INCENTIVE TO ACCEPT SUCH A SITUATION, PARTICULARLY IF COMPARED WITH NO AGREEMENT, IN WHICH CASE WE COULD (A) ADD HEAVIER ICBMS IN EXISTING HOLES, (B) ADD MORE MIRVS IN MINUTEMAN SILOS, AND (C) BRING IN TRIDENT UNDER ANY SCHEDULE WE CHOOSE;

-- IN THIS LIGHT, IF WE ARE TO EXTEND THE INTERIM AGREEMENT SOME ACCOMMODATION FOR OUR NEW PROGRAMS IS NECESSARY, ESPECIALLY IF THE SOVIETS ARE GOING TO INTRODUCE SEVERAL NEW ICBMS, ALL WITH MIRVS;

-- OUR NET INCREASE, EVEN IF MULTIPLIED BY THE NUMBER OF MIRV WARHEADS, IS STILL INSIGNIFICANT IN A TOTAL OF OVER 7,000 RVS.

4. FOR YOUR REFERENCE THE FOLLOWING ARE THE CALCULATIONS THAT ENABLED US TO ARRIVE AT THE SUGGESTION FOR A REVISED LEVEL OF 740 SLBMS.

THE ADDITION OF 4 TRIDENT BOATS RESULTS IN A NET INCREASE OF 96 SLBMS. FROM THIS WE DEDUCT 54 TITANS, LEAVING A RESIDUAL OF 42; FROM THIS WE DEDUCT 16 POLARIS SLBMS, IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE SUBMARINE LEVEL OF 44, LEAVING AN UNACCOUNTED FOR RESIDUAL OF 26. TO COVER THIS WE ASK FOR AN INCREASE IN THE INTERIM AGREEMENT LEVEL OF 30, OR FROM 710 TO 740; TO BE PRECISE, AN INCREASE OF 26.

5. GROMYKO'S ARGUMENT, AS WE HAVE FINALLY UNDERSTOOD IT, IS THAT WHAT WE ARE DOING IS TURNING IN 54 OBSOLESCENT SINGLE WARHEAD ICBM AND 16 SINGLE WARHEAD (ACTUALLY A MRV) OF THE POLARIS CLASS, IN EXCHANGE FOR THE SAME NUMBER OF NEW, MIRVABLE TRIDENT MISSILES, THUS CREATING AN INCREASE OF 70 TIMES 10 WARHEAD OR ABOUT 700 RVS, PLUS A NET INCREASE OF 30 TIMES 10 RVS FOR AN OVERALL INCREASE OF 1,000 RVS. HE THEN ADDS THIS TO OUR SUPPOSED ADVANTAGE OF 250 (850 TO 1100) TO GET A MAJOR US RV ADVANTAGE.

6. IF HE GOES THROUGH THIS ROUTINE, YOU MIGHT SAY THAT WE ARE STILL LIMITED TO 1100, WHICH IS ONLY SLIGHTLY ABOVE OUR CURRENT PROGRAM, SO THAT WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO LIMIT SOME OTHER PROGRAM, EITHER MM III OR POSEIDON, IN ORDER TO BRING IN THE TRIDENT AS A MIRV VEHICLE.

7. YOUR SECOND ALTERNATIVE IS TO AGREE THAT WE WILL NOT CHANGE THE INTERIM AGREEMENT IN ANY RESPECT WHATSOEVER,

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BUT ONLY IN RETURN FOR SOVIET CONCESSIONS:

-- SINCE WE ARE GOING TO BE FORCED TO STAY WITHIN THE INTERIM AGREEMENT LIMITS, WHICH MEANS TURNING IN SOME POLARIS, AND LOSING SOME NUMMERICAL GROUND, THE SOVIETS MUST INDICATE THAT THEY TOO ARE WILLING TO GIVE UP SOMETHING.

-- THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT CONCESSION THEY COULD MAKE WOULD BE TO AGREE TO ABANDON THE SS-18 AS A MIRV VEHICLE.

-- THIS WOULD HAVE THE VIRTUE OF MAKING THE OVERALL AGREEMENT CLOSER IN VIRV THROW WEIGHT AND IN TOTAL RVs.

-- IN ADDITION, SINCE WE ARE PRESERVING THE INTERIM AGREEMENT WITHOUT ANY CHANGE, WE PREFER A TERMINAL DATE OF 1979, TO AVOID A US ELECTION YEAR.

-- IN THIS CASE, HOWEVER, THE SOVIET LEVEL SHOULD BE 700.

8. (NOTE: THIS LAST IS NOT OUTRAGEOUS, SINCE ADDING 700 MIRVS IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS IS NOT MUCH BELOW THE AVERAGE OF ADDING 1,000 IN SIX YEARS. INDEED, IT MAY BE ABOUT WHAT THE SOVIETS COULD ACHIEVE, IF THEIR SLBM IS NOT BROUGHT IN UNTIL 1978. EVEN THEN, THEY HAVE A GOOD BASE FOR CONTINUING WITH AN SLBM MIRV PROGRAM IF THE AGREEMENT EXPIRES.)

9. IN SHORT, IN THIS CASE, WE CONFIRM THE INTERIM AGREEMENT FOR FIVE YEARS, IN RETURN FOR A MIRV LIMIT LOWER THAN WE HAVE PROPOSED, AND CONDITIONED ON A BAN (OR LOW LIMIT) ON THE HEAVY MIRVS.

10. WHICHEVER CASE YOU DECIDE, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT GROMYKO

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GIVE YOU NOW, OR SHORTLY, SOMETHING OTHER THAN POLEMICS ON NUMBERS. WE HAVE GOT TO KNOW SOON WHICH DIRECTION WE ARE MOVING IN.

11. YOU ARE IN THE BEST POSITION TO JUDGE WHETHER EVENTS IN THE AREA OF YOUR TRAVELS EXCLUDE TAKING A HARD LINE ON SALT FOR NOW. YOU MAY PREFER TO STALL UNTIL YOUR RETURN, PARTICULARLY SINCE WE ARE RESPONDING ON ABM AND THE THRESHOLD TEST BAN.

12. IF YOU DO DECIDE TO PRESS HIM, MY RECOMMENDATION IS TO STAY WITH THE FIRST OPTION OF CHANGING THE INTERIM-AGREEMENT AND CONCEDED A LEVEL OF 850. THE SECOND OPTION OF LOWER MIRV NUMBERS FOR THE SOVIETS AND A LIMIT OF SOME KIND ON THE BIG MISSILES IS STRATEGICALLY MORE ATTRACTIVE, BUT I SUSPECT THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD ONLY AGREE TO IT AT SOMETHING APPROACHING THE 850 LEVEL, WHICH AS YOU KNOW IS PROBABLY ABOUT THEIR CURRENT PROGRAM, OR SLIGHTLY GREATER. EVEN IN THE FIRST OPTION, YOU MAY WANT TO RAISE THE QUESTION OF LIMITING HEAVY MIRVED MISSILES.

13. (NOTE: RECENT PHOTOGRAPHIC INTELLIGENCE SUGGEST THAT THE PLANNED NUMBER OF SS-19 TYPE MIRV MAY NOT EXCEED 610, BUT THE NUMBER OF SS-18S MAY BE AT LEAST 174, PLUS WHATEVER SLBMS ARE DEPLOYED.)

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